

PAKISTAN CORONAVIRUS CIVACTS CAMPAIGN

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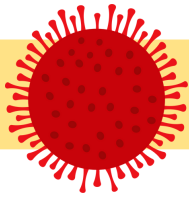


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With the continuous spread of COVID-19 in Pakistan; Accountability Lab is continuously building on its work with district governments and Community Front Liners (network of volunteers) through Coronavirus CivActs Campaign (CCC) to debunk rumours, fake news & misinformation related to COVID-19. The Coronavirus CivActs Campaign supported by the Open Society Foundation also conducts fact-checking, synthesizes data, pushes out the verified information through weekly bulletins and social media campaign for mass awareness, and gathers feedback on the COVID19 response in Pakistan. The bulletins are disseminated in five languages including English, Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi & Sindhi to reach far and wide to help citizens build resilience and fight against the pandemic. These bulletins are also shared with a range of stakeholders from the general public, to government departments, development agencies, CSOs and humanitarian networks via online and offline means.

The campaign also highlights important government decisions, information about vaccination drives, community feedback and concerns related to COVID-19. The objective of the campaign is to enhance awareness among the most vulnerable segments of the society including women, youth, ethnic and religious minorities, transgenders and persons with disabilities. In the current phase of the campaign, Accountability Lab has also engaged the local female community leaders and building their capacity through training and active civic engagement to counter-myths and disseminate facts around COVID-19 and gender issues.



COVID-19 vaccines are causing new variants to evolve.



FACT ✓

OR

MYTH ✗

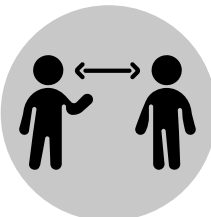
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is no evidence that vaccines can cause new variants to evolve. Alternatively Covid-19 vaccines can save you from new forms that are emerging. However this is not the case at all.

The virus mutations occur precisely in those areas where there is not yet a high vaccination rate and a big number of people are meeting together within a restricted area. Lillebaek, Professor of Global Health Section, Department of Public Health, University of Copenhagen, says that new variants could pose greater challenges in places that have lower vaccination rates.

CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) suggests that everyone who is five years of age and older should get their vaccines done as soon as possible.

Source: [CDC](#)

PREVENTIVE MEASURES THAT CAN BE TAKEN AGAINST CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Wear a mask that has two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric and covers your mouth, nose and chin. It should not be loose on the sides.

Practice physical distancing outside your home by keeping a distance of 3 feet between you and others.

Get registered for vaccination as soon as possible and follow all pre and post-vaccination guidelines.

Avoid unnecessary contact with eyes, nose and mouth as that increases chances of virus transfer.



Keep yourself and your environment clean.

If you fall sick, stay at home and contact a healthcare provider.

Avoid unnecessary outdoor socialising and spending time in crowded spaces

WHY ARE OMICRON VARIANTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS AT THE UPWARD PUSH?

New studies indicate why exactly the omicron variant is so infectious. We take a look at the technological know-how at the back of covid-19 variants, and how future vaccines will address them. The coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 is quite flexible, with a huge number of variants and sub variants. The [omicron variant](#) alone has more than 130 subline ages.

In Europe, the [omicron subvariants](#) BA.4 and BA.5 are presently at the rise. Why are they spreading so fast, in spite of the fact that many people have already been vaccinated?

Omicron is better at Evading the Immune System

Krishna Mallela, a professor in the branch of pharmaceutical sciences at the College of Colorado in the US said that new variants are traditionally defined as a modern-day set of mutations that is believed to change how the virus features. Normally, those variations have expanded infection ratio and accelerated ailment severity. Now scientists are beginning to apprehend why particular mutations cause variations to be extra infectious, like omicron, or more lethal, like delta and it comes all the way down to how the coronavirus enters cells, and how our immune machine fights it off.

A [modern observation](#) from America confirmed that omicron is more infectious because it can better evade our immune system. After vaccination or previous infections, antibodies circulate in your body and hunt for viruses. They stumble upon coronavirus through its spike protein, which then alerts for the virus to be neutralized. The study indicates that the mutations in omicron sub-variants BA. 1 and BA.2 alternate the structure of the spike protein. "The mutations are on the spots wherein antibodies bind to the spike protein. The mutations cause a specific binding floor, which is less diagnosed with the aid of antibodies.

This ends in the evasion of antibody protection," Kamal Singh, an immunologist from the college of Missouri within the US.

Basically, your immune system is less good at hunting down and destroying omicron virus debris. This ambiguity is what prompted the huge [upward thrust in infections](#) around the world due to the fact that omicron became first identified in South Africa in November 2021.

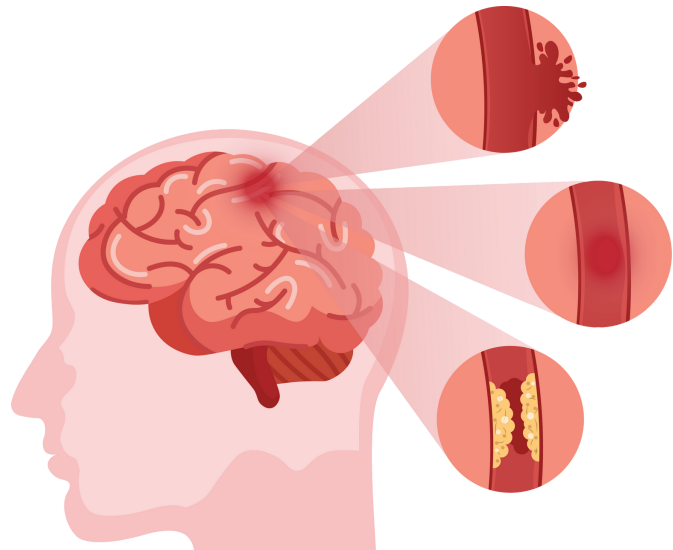
Source: [DW](#)



EVEN BEYOND THE DISEASE, COVID HAS IMPACTED OUR HEART HEALTH

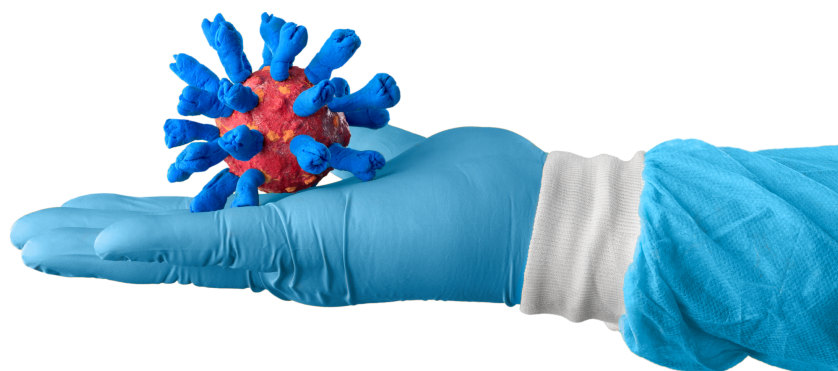
Since the pandemic started, many people have experienced a heart related issue. Our heart plays a great role in our body. Despite the impressive task of keeping us alive every second of every day, they, too, have felt the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. They will have been damaged by the disease itself, or they have been indirectly impacted by the manner we've had to exchange our lives and habits. A little more than two years after the global Covid-19 pandemic became declared by way of the WHO (World Health Organization), researchers are nonetheless working to make sense of the respiration virus' cascading outcomes through the body. Scientists are also discriminating Covid-19's different, much less direct impacts. Strain, lifestyle modifications, more consumption, and boundaries to fitness care get right of entry in addition to the disease itself are affecting people's coronary heart health and lead to growth in heart disorder.

[Coronary heart ailment](#) describes more than a surprising coronary heart assault, it's miles a great time period for numerous situations that impact the manner the coronary heart capabilities/functions, and it could bypass hand-in-hand with different commonplace fitness conditions, which incorporates diabetes. [Excessive blood stress](#) is a top threat for a coronary heart disorder. Even as coronary heart sickness continues to be the main [cause of death](#) around the world, contemporary remedies/treatments and prevention efforts have caused a [constant decline](#) in the number of deaths over the last few long time. Now, the pandemic is threatening the development made in coronary heart health.



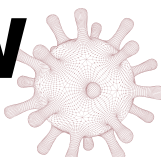
Whilst adjusted for age, the mortality ratio for coronary heart ailment and stroke improved from 2019 to 2020 inside the US, in line with a [study](#) posted in March. The growth became highest for Black humans, who had a fivefold growth in contrast to white people.

In line with a February survey thru the Cleveland sanatorium, forty percent of United States American residents have experienced at least one coronary heart-associated difficulty for reason at the beginning of the pandemic, which includes shortness of breath or augmented blood compression.





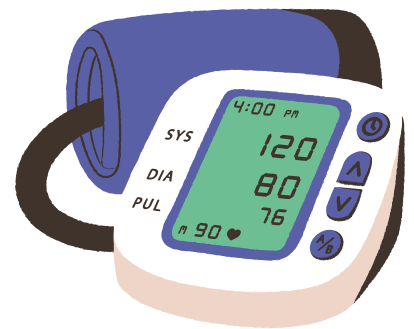
Expert Interview



In this month's edition, we interviewed Dr. Umar Hashmi. He is currently working as a Senior Registrar Cardiology at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) at Islamabad. Mr. Umar has a degree of FCPS Cardiology in medical.

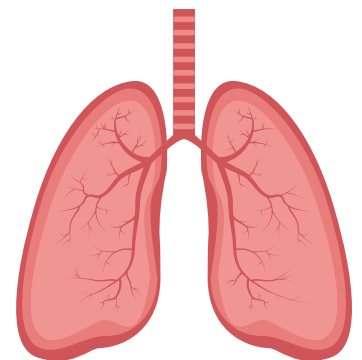
Studies conducted by some independent health researchers/institutes suggest exaggerated/severe symptoms of Covid-19 in people with hypertension (blood pressure issues). Is this true?

Although there are studies being conducted by different health researchers, currently, there is no verified data that suggests a direct link between hypertension and adverse COVID effects/symptoms. However, as a health expert, we recommend people with health issues such as hypertension, asthma, and lung and heart conditions to be extra cautious. We would need to wait until further randomized trials or prospective studies are conducted.



Does covid-19 infection in any way affect vital organs of the body in the long term?

The initial variants of the covid-19 virus immensely affected the respiratory system (especially the lungs). The studies conducted during that time strongly suggested Covid-19 led to lung fibrosis and in some cases cardiomyopathies as well as pericarditis etc. (heart-related issues). The long-term effects of the virus on the cardiac system are still to be studied. Additionally, there is no evidence yet that suggests whether covid-19 virus affects any other major organs of the body including the liver, kidneys, etc.



As per some recent research, covid-19 infection impacts our heart's health in an adverse way in the long run. Please provide your expertise on this issue.

Soon after the breakout of covid-19, health researchers began researching the link between heart disease and COVID-19. And it is safe to say, after three years, we are in a better position to answer this question. According to a study by the American College of Cardiology (ACC) on March 6, 2020, people with underlying cardiovascular disease have a higher mortality rate with COVID-19. In Pakistan even as I previously mentioned, there have been cases where the covid patients (with heart conditions) experienced different heart-related issues such as myocarditis, cardiomyopathy, pancarditis as well as coronary thrombosis. However, no studies yet suggest the long-term impacts of the covid-19 virus on the heart's health. We will be able to answer this question better in the coming months or years. But since there have been aforementioned issues with heart patients during Covid-19, it is vital for people with cardiac conditions to be very careful.

CORONAVIRUS

INSIGHTS

What guidelines should people especially with heart conditions follow if infected with covid-19?

I recommend the following for patients with heart-related conditions if infected by the virus:

1



Do not discontinue taking your heart medication even if infected with Covid-19. Seek a doctor to figure out the combination of drugs to be used during the infected period.

2



Kindly refrain from taking unverified drugs to Treat COVID-19. Earlier in 2020, Food and Drug Authority (FDA) withdrew its emergency use authorization for hydroxychloroquine, a malaria drug, to treat COVID-19. The agency cited heart rhythm problems as a side effect of the drug.

3



Avoid taking any additional stress or try to minimize stress during the infection period. You can do light yoga and exercises for this purpose.

4



Regularly monitor your blood pressure and heartbeat throughout the period of infection. In case of any abnormal readings, kindly seek medical help.

5



Please refrain from taking any information regarding the diet, or medication from any unverified source. During this era of social media, misinformation is rampant and one must stay away from it.

Where can I get tested?

Islamabad	National Institute of Health Park Road, Chak Shahzad, Islamabad
Karachi	Agha Khan University Hospital, Stadium Road, Karachi, Sindh
Hyderabad	Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS), Liberty Market Roundabout, Liaquat University Hospital, Hyderabad
Khairpur	Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences, Gambat, Khairpur, Sindh
Peshawar	Hayatabad Medical Complex Phase-4 Phase 4 Hayatabad, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
Mardan	Chughtai Lab Mardan point, near Allied Bank, Shamsi Road, Mardan, KP
Haripur	Excel Labs, TMA Plaza Shop No. 6, Near Girls Degree College Circular Road Haripur, KP
Lahore	Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital, 7A Block R-3 M.A. Johar Town, Lahore, Punjab
Multan	Nishtar Hospital Nishtar Road, Justice Hamid Colony, Multan
Rawalpindi	Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Range Road, CMH Complex, Rawalpindi, Punjab
Quetta	Fatima Jinnah Hospital Bahadurabad, Wahdat Colony, Quetta
Muzaffarabad	Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS), Ambore, Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir
Gilgit	District Headquarters Hospital, Hospital Road, Gilgit, GB

For more cities visit the [COVID-19 Health Advisory Platform](#)